



ABBA® SuperTrouper





ABBA Super Trouper

ABBA Super Trouper

Super Trouper was first released in Sweden as Polar POLS 322 on November 3, 1980. Recording sessions began in February 1980 and continued until October 1980. The album was recorded at Polar Music Studios in Stockholm, Sweden and at Wembley Arena in London, England.

— ABBA with friends at the Super Trouper album release, October 1980.

A circus of emotions

Lyrics notes by Carl Magnus Palm

Super Trouper, ABBA's seventh album, was released in Sweden on November 3, 1980, only a few weeks after the last mixing sessions for the album. This was not the first time that ABBA had completed an LP just shortly before it was due for release. In this case the recording of the title track started as late as a month before the album reached record shops.

Work on the *Super Trouper* LP had commenced in January, when Björn and Benny flew to Barbados for a songwriting holiday. It was a repeat of the previous year's fortunate experience in the Bahamas, where they wrote several of the songs for the *Voulez-Vous* album.

This time they completed no less than five songs: *Andante*, *Andante*, *The Piper*, *Happy New Year*, *On And On And On* and *Elaine*. The first four songs were included on the completed album, while *Elaine* ended up the B-side of the single *The Winner Takes It All*. It has been added as a bonus track to this CD release of *Super Trouper*. Among the other of these first few

songs was *Happy New Year*, which actually started life as an idea for a musical. The plot would be centred around a New Year's Eve, a thought that got into Björn and Benny's heads on the plane over to Barbados. They ran into the comedian John Cleese at the holiday resort and asked him if he would be interested in writing a manuscript. When Cleese turned them down, the idea was abandoned.

After the first basic recordings had been completed, ABBA travelled to Japan in March for a two week period of concerts. It marked the completion of the tour that had been started in North America and Europe the previous Autumn. It was also the group's last-ever live performances on foreign soil. ABBA were never especially fond of touring, so it has to be assumed it was not with especially heavy hearts that they returned to Sweden afterwards.

April saw the completion of the first tracks for the album. Songwriting and recording sessions then continued throughout

The album cover and the video for *Super Trouper* were made at the same time.





the Spring and Summer of 1980. This period produced the first single to be released from the album. *The Winner Takes It All* is by common consent regarded as one of ABBA's very best recordings, and perhaps Agnetha's finest vocal performance ever.

Lyricist Björn has admitted that the words to the song were coloured by the divorce between himself and Agnetha. But he has also pointed out that the lyrics were more a reflection on the painful experience of splitting up, rather than a literal depiction on what the couple had been through. "There were no winners in our divorce", as he so succinctly put it.

The Winner Takes It All was accompanied by an evocative video, as ever directed by Lasse Hallström (today a prominent movie director in his own right: *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?*, *The Cider House Rules*, *Chocolat*, etc.), with Agnetha acting the part of an abandoned woman amidst the other three, happily laughing band members. The single hit number one in countries such as Great Britain, The Netherlands, Belgium and South Africa, reaching the Top 5 in plenty more. Around the same time that

wrote more personal lyrics. *Our Last Summer* was based on his own melancholy memory of a teenage romance in France.

Towards the final sessions for the album, it was decided that the LP was going to be titled *Super Troupers*. The name referred to the colloquial term for the gigantic spotlights used at events such as stadium concerts. With Frida on lead vocals, *Super Troupers* was yet another worldwide smash hit for ABBA. In some countries, *On And On And On* was chosen as the second single instead. In Australia, for instance, the song became a Top 10 hit.

Album cover designer Rune Söderqvist and photographer Lars Larsson associated the spotlights with a circus environment, however, "Circus" became the keyword in their discussions, and one thing led to another. Their idea for a sleeve design was to take a picture of ABBA surrounded by circus performers – in London's Piccadilly Circus.

But those plans soon ground to a halt. Söderqvist was informed by the London authorities that there was a law against entertainers or animals appearing in the central parts of the city. Apparently, this was because there are so many theatres in the

"The words to the song were coloured by the divorce"

When *The Winner Takes It All* was made, ABBA also recorded *Our Last Summer*. On this song, it was Frida who handled the lead vocals. The words were yet another example of Björn's tendencies to

area, and they would otherwise have taken the opportunity to stage publicity stunts. That effectively killed the London idea. Instead, the decision was made to stage a photo shoot in Stock-

ABBA Super Trouper

hairs. The Europa Film Studio was booked for the evening of October 3, 1980. Genuine circus performers were hired, while the ABBA members and their friends brought together as many

the photo session for the album sleeve. Björn and Benny sat to work in the studio to try to come up with a new song. By pure luck, the album title that had already been chosen happened to

"Super Trouper was yet another worldwide smash hit for ABBA"

acquaintances as they could find. The purpose was to create the feeling of a huge crowd surrounding ABBA in the picture. Apart from the circus artists, the people appearing in the cover picture are employees from ABBA's record company Polar Music, some fellow musicians and singers, as well as personal friends who had absolutely no connection to the music business. All the assembled acquaintances were instructed to dress up in various festive costumes and to apply heavy make-up.

While plans for this album sleeve photo session were made, ABBA were in the very last stages of recordings for the new album. A few weeks earlier they had recorded stand-out tracks such as *Me And I*, featuring an Eartha Kitt-inspired lead vocal by Frida, and *Lay All Your Love On Me*, an Agnetha-led dance track which gained a limited single release in the Spring of 1981. The group also started work on a song called *Put On Your White Sombbrero*. But a while into the recording of the track, the group started feeling that they hadn't got it exactly right. The decision was made to leave the track unreleased. Just a few days before

M as the title to the new composition as well. *Super Trouper* became the opening track on the new album, as well as the second single to be released from the sessions. With Frida on lead vocals, *Super Trouper* became yet another worldwide smash hit for ABBA.

Put On Your White Sombbrero, which also featured a Frida lead, would languish in the vaults for 14 years before it was included on the box set *Thank You For The Music* in 1994. By that time, Björn and Benny had changed their minds about the recording and were quite happy to see its release. Naturally, *Put On Your White Sombbrero* has been included as a bonus track on this CD.

Super Trouper became one of ABBA's best-selling albums ever. The closing track of the LP was *The Way Old Friends Do*, a live recording from the group's shows at Wembley Arena in November 1979. In hindsight, this *Auld Lang Syne*-style song functioned as a farewell to the more public part of the group's career. ABBA's wind-down years were waiting around the corner. >

Björn and Benny with director Lasse Hallström during the making of the Hågeri film 'Thank You'. >>











Think about yourself for a minute
 And you'll find the answer in it
 Everyone's a friend
 We're free sun and rainy weather
 Sometimes we're all together
 Me and
 pretty things and inspiration
 We're a funny combination
 Me and

06 Happy New Year

Universal/Union Songs AB

No little hurricane
 And the fireworks are through
 It's a new year, it's a new year
 Feeling lost and feeling blue
 It's a new year, it's a new year
 And this morning seems so grey
 So unlike yesterday
 Here's the time for us to say
 Happy new year, happy new year
 May we all have a vision now and then
 Of a world where every neighbour is a friend
 Happy new year, happy new year
 May we all have our hopes, our will to try
 If we don't we might as well lay down and die
 You and
 sometimes I see
 Like the driver from a wild other
 And I see how it serves

Oh yes, man is a fool
 It's a new year, it's a new year
 Dragging on, feel it clay
 Never knowing he's astray
 Keeps on going anyway
 Happy new year, happy new year
 May we all have a vision now and then
 Of a world where every neighbour is a friend
 Happy new year, happy new year
 May we all have our hopes, our will to try
 If we don't we might as well lay down and die
 You and

Seems to me now
 That the friends we had before
 Are all dead, nothing more
 In a world where every neighbour is a friend
 It's the end of a decade

And the friends we had before
 What can say what will be
 What we're waiting for in the
 In the end of eighty nine
 Happy new year, happy new year
 May we all have a vision now and then
 Of a world where every neighbour is a friend
 Happy new year, happy new year
 May we all have our hopes, our will to try
 If we don't we might as well lay down and die
 You and

07 Our Last Summer

© Andersson, Olsson
 Universal/Union Songs AB

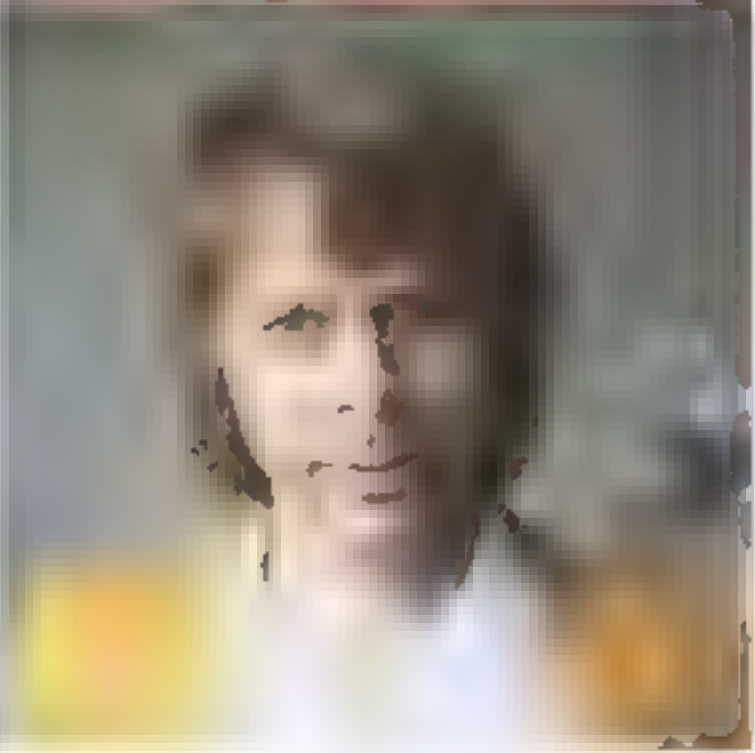
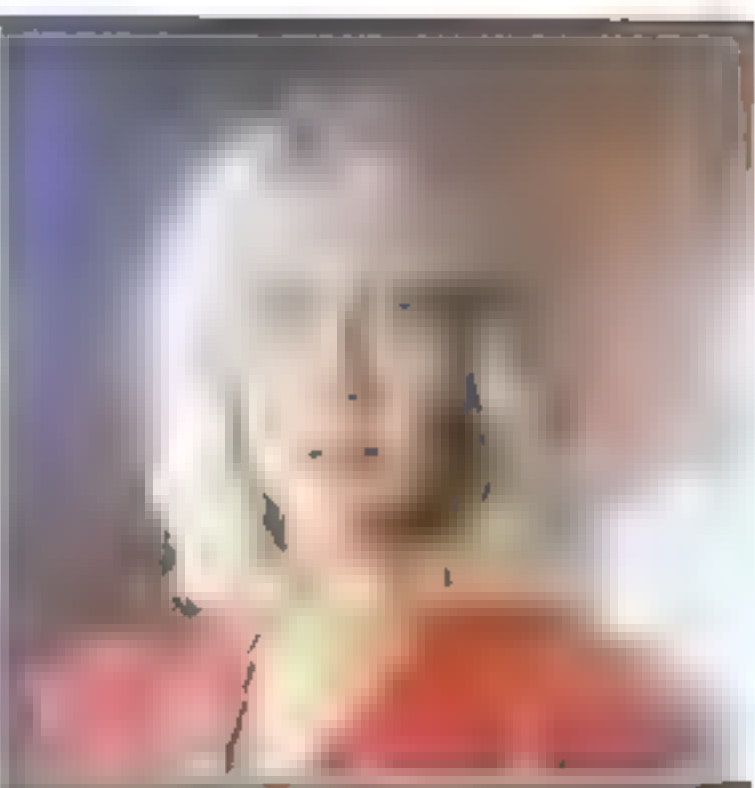
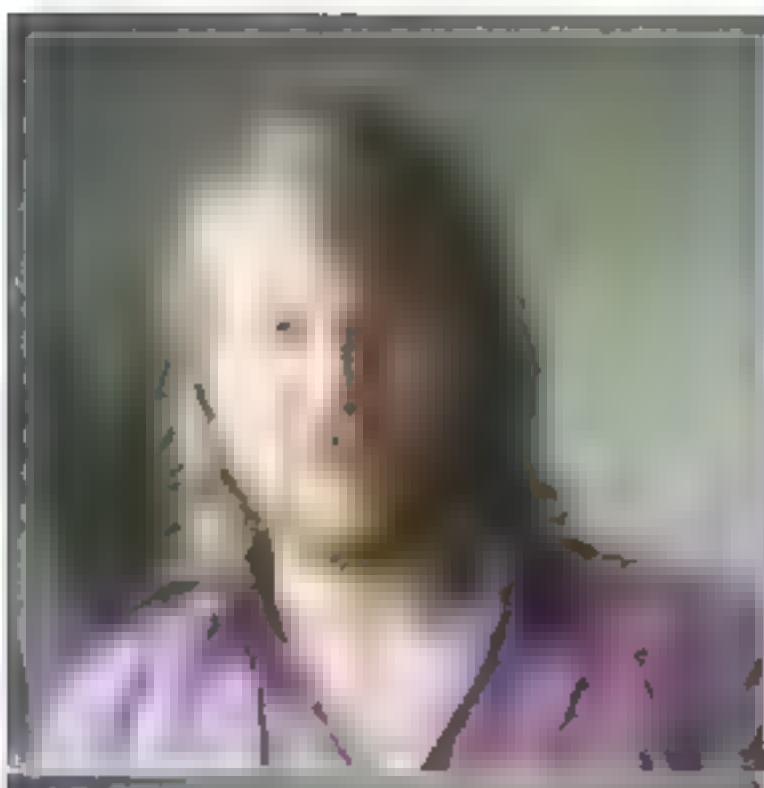
The long night, the dark night
 And it's hard to believe us
 And strolling down the Elysium
 We had a little reason for
 And you
 You talked of ethics, philosophy and
 Under the stars
 We had our chance

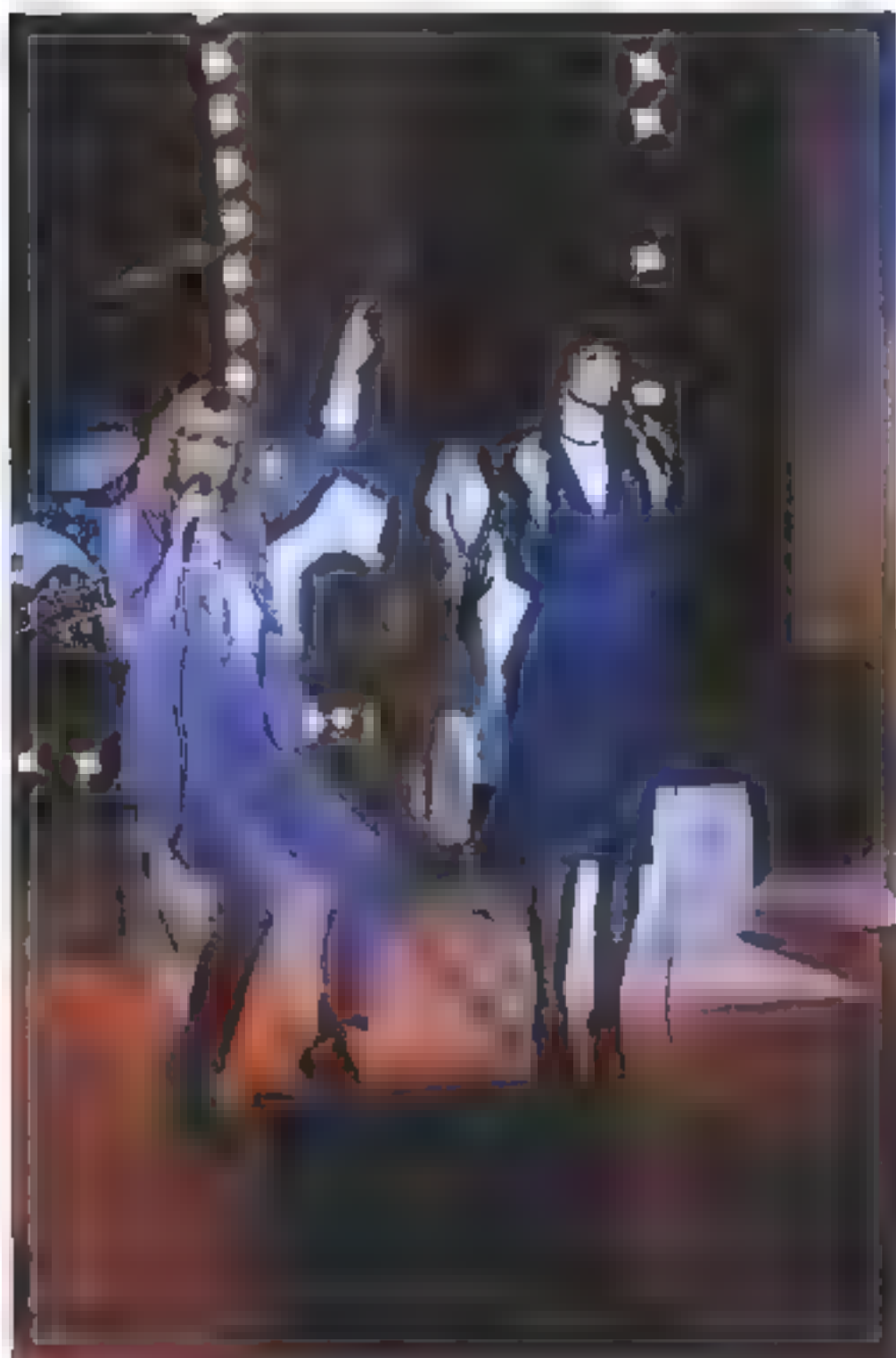
Walks along the Seine, laughing in the air
 At last summer
 Memories that remain
 We made our way along the river
 And we sat down in the grass
 By the coffee tower
 I was so happy we had met
 It was the sign of his regret
 Oh yes

If the flower power
 But underneath we had a fear of dying
 Of getting old, a fear of slowly dying
 We took the dance
 Like we were dancing our last dance
 I can still recall our last summer
 I still see it all
 In the town square, beyond the Nolle Church

Walking hand in hand

Rehearsing the signs for the Super Kricket album





1. The first thing I noticed when I stepped
 out of the house was the cold air. It was
 like a giant hand reaching out to grab me.
 I shivered and pulled my coat tighter around
 me. The street was empty, and the only
 sound was the wind whistling through the
 trees.

The Way Old Friends Do

2. It was a strange feeling, standing there
 alone in the middle of the night. I had
 never before felt so isolated. The house
 behind me felt like a distant memory.
 I took a deep breath and stepped
 forward. The path was dark, but I
 knew where I was going. I had
 been here before, and I knew the way.
 The stars were out, and the moon
 was full. It was a beautiful night, but
 I felt like I was walking through a
 dream.

Smiles of joy and smiles of sorrow
We will always see it through
(Oh I don't care what comes tomorrow
We can face it together
The way old friends do)

11 Elaine

(B. Anderson/B. Olmsted
Universal/Cherry Songs AB)

You take, you borrow, you swear
And still you never reach her
You want, you try to share
But you can never reach her
It's a dead end street
They tie your hands and tie your feet
And the street is narrow
A nowhere lane
A nowhere train for Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
You know they're gonna get you
You try to break away
But they will never let you
It's a dead end street
They tie your hands and tie your feet
And the street is narrow
A nowhere lane
A nowhere train for Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
You're like a goldfish in a bowl
Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
They have your mind, they'll take your soul
Now that you're gone, you know they'll never let you
You come, you stay, you go
It really doesn't matter

You've done it all before
By now they'll know the pattern
It's a dead end street
They tie your hands and tie your feet
And the street is narrow
A nowhere lane
A nowhere train for Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
You're like a goldfish in a bowl
Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
They have your mind, they'll take your soul
Now that you're gone, you know they're gonna get you
Now that you're gone, you know they'll never let you
It's a dead end street
They tie your hands and tie your feet
And the street is narrow
A nowhere lane
A nowhere train for Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
You're like a goldfish in a bowl
Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
They have your mind, they'll take your soul
Now that you're gone, you know they're gonna get you
Now that you're gone, you know they'll never let you

12 Put On Your White Sombbrero

(B. Anderson/B. Olmsted
Universal/Cherry Songs AB)

Put on your white sombrero
Saddle your horse my dear
And ride off into the sunset
You'd better go
For there is no
Place for you here

Like an old fashioned hero
You stand before me
You think our life is a movie
My world is real
I live and feel
And I can do without you
Put on your white sombrero
Your red sanders too
Think of this day as a showdown
Goodbye my friend
This is the end
For me and you
Now be a bold warrior
Don't show your feelings
Or cry while you're disappearing
Into the night
All dressed in white
Unforgiven and here, without me
Put on your white sombrero
Like all the cowboys do
Go find a sweet señorita
Somebody else
Who'll never succumb
Harshly to you
You're such a caballero
Proud, never joking
I want someone who will take me
Just as I am, I need a man
Who is in rhyme, With his time
You'll never take me
Just as I am, I need a man
Who is in rhyme, With his time

Credits

Musicians: Drums: Per Lindvall (1). Drums: Ole Brunkert (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12). Bass: Mike Watson (1, 2). Bass: Rutger Gunnarsson (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12). Guitars: Janne Schaffer (1, 3, 6). Guitars: Lasse Welander (2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12). Saxophones: Lars O. Carlsson, Kjetik Wojciechowski, Janne Kling (3). Percussion: Åke Sundqvist (1, 2, 5, 7). Acoustic guitars: Björn Ulvåus (1, 5, 6, 7). Acoustic guitars: Lasse Welander and Björn Ulvåus (3). Keyboards and synthesizers: Benny Andersson (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12). String arrangements: Rutger Gunnarsson (2). Flutes: Janne Kling (3).

Produced by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvåus. *The Way Out Friends* Discovered live at Wembley Arena, London, November, 1979. Recorded and mixed at Polar Music Studios, Stockholm. Engineered by Michael B. Tretow.

Cover photos by Lars Larsson. Booklet photos by Per Kagerö/Pressens Bild. Anders Hansen, Premium Publishing. Anders Hansen/Polar Music. Infi. Polar Music. Infi. Master tape photo by Tomas Fager. Original art direction by Rune Söderqvist. Art direction and redesign 2001 by Fredrik Hurtig/BO2. New liner notes 2004 by Carl Magnus Palm, with thanks to Ian Cook and Tomi Nickson. Remastered 2005 by Jim Riddle with Michael B. Tretow. Release supervised by Maria Söderström. Release project coordinators: Jeanette Andersson and Margareta Lundström. Thanks to Görd Hansen and Carl Benny.

Filming the video for *The Winner Takes It All*, July 1982. >>





LUCY-93892

